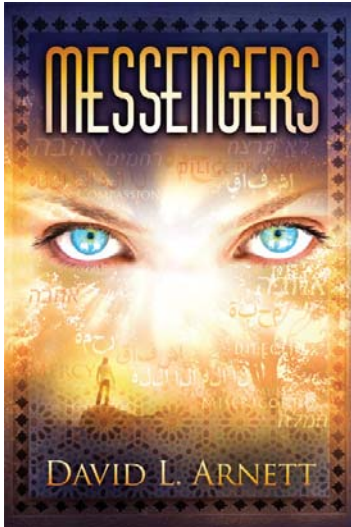


*The Debut Spiritual/Political Thriller by Former U.S. Diplomat
David L. Arnett*



MESSENGERS

“Maybe I was not out of my body long enough. I did not pass through a dark tunnel and reach the light, where the whole of my life and its effect on other people were revealed to me. No, it just didn’t happen that way. I was hovering over my body just long enough to see...”

What if you received a second chance at life after a near-fatal accident? What if the reason for your survival was facilitated by a guardian angel whose very presence—or lack thereof—set you on an unknown and life-altering journey? Such is the challenge facing protagonist Jake Daniels in author **David L. Arnett’s** provocative debut novel, *MESSENGERS* (June 15, 2011, Unity Books, Hardcover, \$24.95, 313 pages, ISBN: 978-0-87159-355-9).

By all accounts, Jake Daniels should have died when his SUV collided head-on with a moving truck. Now his vision of a woman at the accident scene is consuming his every thought. A non-religious person, he becomes convinced that the woman is an angel who saved his life—and he must know why. Jake becomes obsessed with learning more about angels, evil and the meaning of existence. His curiosity and painstaking research set the stage for a breathtaking and mysterious international journey riddled with intrigue, politics and revelation.

Leaving his supportive fiancée behind and crossing numerous borders—both earthly and otherworldly—Jake seeks out those with similar experiences in a quest that ultimately leads to encounters with angels themselves. These cosmic beings share with him deeper insights about spirituality, evil and humankind, eventually leading him to his face-to-face confrontation with demons as well, including Satan as a projection of human consciousness.

Through these earth-shattering experiences, Jake discovers the truths uniting all faith traditions and feels a responsibility to share his insights. He responds to an urgent inner calling by taking a bold and courageous stand at a high-profile public gathering on a deeply controversial political issue, where he issues a radical challenge to those in attendance. He urges them to live true to what the greatest wisdom teachers have taught: Love, Mercy, Compassion. Their actions will determine the future course of humankind—whether it rises to a new level of being or succumbs to the destruction of its own making.

Arnett, a former U.S. diplomat, uses his decades of diplomatic service, experience abroad and masterful grasp of world religions and the English language to deliver an intriguing novel about the profound power of unconditional love, enlightenment and compassion, set against the backdrop of the turbulent early 21st century. Through his character’s central truths, he provides a timely look at our politically and religiously-fractious world, and evokes ways to reverse the turmoil that is currently creating evil, discord, violence and hatred on Earth and threatening its ultimate destruction.

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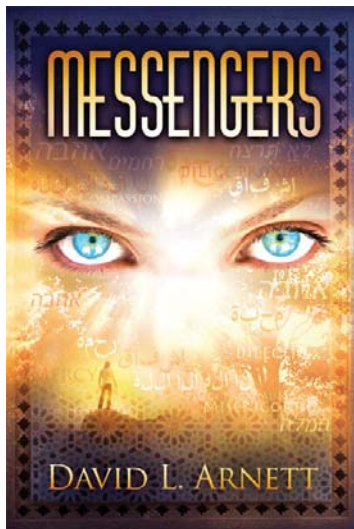
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DAVID L. ARNETT

David L. Arnett spent more than 30 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, representing the U.S. government in a variety of diplomatic posts around the world, the last as the head of the American Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey. He holds a Ph.D. in English and has been an Army officer and an English teacher. Arnett is fluent in Danish, German, Norwegian, and Turkish. He currently devotes his time to writing and lives in Sedona, Arizona, with his wife, Vivi. This is Mr. Arnett's first book.

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DAVID L. ARNETT Q&A

Why did you decide to write *Messengers*? What was your inspiration?

I had been considering a book involving a near-death experience for many years, turning it and shaping it in my mind. I had, in fact, experienced a dream of unusual clarity in the early 70's in which I died and passed through a dark tunnel with eerie musical tones before approaching a distant light—familiar elements to those who read Raymond Moody's *Life after Life* some years later but was totally unknown to me then. My wife and I also experienced an inexplicable failure of our car engine on the German autobahn in the early 1990's, a circumstance that prevented us from being in the center of a horrific accident a couple of miles down the road. The engine never failed or sputtered again. These and other incidents have certainly served as inspiration.

You have held a number of diplomatic positions around the world. Did your experiences in government help shape the book, and if so, in what way?

I served in Turkey on three separate occasions for a total of nine years. Those years provided me with a wealth of knowledge about Islam and stimulated me to learn much more about Mevlana, or Rumi. After 9/11, I recommended that the all-encompassing love found in the Sufi texts be used in U.S. public diplomacy activities as a counter-balance to the violent interpretations of Islam found in Wahabiism. I also recommended that we not shy away from quoting from Islamic scriptures and emphasizing that Islam honors Jews and Christians as fellow peoples of the "Book." There has been a great and unfortunate fear, however, that Western focus upon Islamic teachings would be misinterpreted and condemned. My experience says otherwise.

Are there autobiographical elements in the book?

On the one hand, of course, there are always autobiographical elements in any creative work. More to the point, perhaps, I have been to most of the locations in the book, and I have spent many years in Washington, D.C., which plays a central role in the book. Moreover, I was at the headquarters building at the Department of State in Washington as 9/11 unfolded, and that day and those that immediately followed are burned in my memory.

How much of the book is art imitating life?

That's an interesting question. I prefer to think of it as art illuminating life. For example, it is my contention and firm belief that all of us are frequently exposed to events and occurrences that cannot be explained by current scientific knowledge and that we usually dismiss them as we quickly slip back into the everyday world and a kind of hypnotic insistence upon the mundane. I've seen polls which show that some 80% of Americans believe in angels and/or guardian angels. But how many of them will freely tell you why? Yet, given the right environment of trust and acceptance, most people in my experience will tell you about being touched by the supernatural in one form or another. It is my hope that the book will illumine the importance of the transcendental in all of our lives.

***Messengers* takes place amidst the backdrop of a post-9/11 world. Do you believe the political unrest and religious turmoil you address in the book is in reality approaching a tipping point?**

Throughout the recorded history of humankind, there have always been religious wars and violent conflicts fueled by religion. Very few if any religions can claim truthfully that they have escaped them. The internal conflicts within the major religions have often been as bloody as those among themselves, whether we look at Catholics and Protestants, Sunnis and Shiites, or many others. Today, we are no longer seeking to avoid Prof. Huntington's "clash of civilizations" but rather to deal with it, as it is a reality that is affecting all of us. I am reminded of the words of Jesus: "Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God." Moreover, for the first time in human history, religious conflict bears the potential for launching the absolute destruction of our planet, since the struggle against nuclear proliferation has failed. There are religious groups and even countries today, or at least their fanatical leadership, that cannot be trusted not to use nuclear weapons against perceived "enemies of God."

Who do you believe will benefit from the universal themes and messages found in *Messengers*?

There are two primary themes in the book: (a) the need to unite all of the world's religions, or at least to improve cooperation among their leaders greatly; and (b) the overarching need for everyone to understand that their thoughts bear creative power that can either benefit the human race or destroy it. I believe that we have been granted not only free will but also the power of creation itself. Quantum physics postulates that the ultimate source of matter is the swirling energy of probability waves that collapse into a single "reality" under the influence of awareness. In the book, Jake Daniels learns that malignant thoughts will create malignant outcomes over time, and that we all bear intense responsibility for the world and perhaps the universe that we are creating together. In those terms, certainly everyone may benefit from a closer examination of the vast power of their own creative energies.

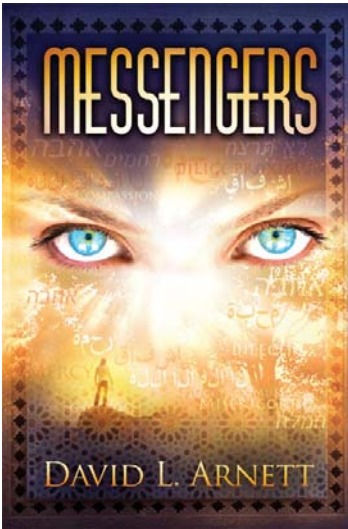
What do you hope readers take away from this book?

The central message of the book is the necessity to focus upon three simple words and the full meaning of what they represent: Love, Mercy, and Compassion. One reader has already told me with sincere warmth that she now runs "Love, Mercy, and Compassion" through her mind whenever she makes a decision, small or big. I would hope that many readers in the future will do the same thing, both for themselves and for others.

Is becoming a published author a major career shift for you, or something you had considered earlier in your life?

I have been an Army officer, teacher and diplomat, in that order. Nevertheless, writing has been my passion from the time I produced an admittedly quite short science fiction story when I was seven. I have published pieces in foreign policy and academic journals, a foreign policy series for a large newspaper, and several poems. I also wrote an unpublished novella years ago that the great screenwriter and film producer Carl Foreman began to promote before his untimely death in 1984. In any case, I now have the opportunity to write full time, and I am planning to make the most of it.

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BYTES OF *MESSENGERS*

“There I was again, floating over my twisted and bloodied body and suddenly becoming aware of the need to turn my disembodied head toward the side of the road, and there she was, standing there just a few feet away, alabaster skin without a line in her face, and then her eyes fastened on mine, and the flash in my mind’s camera flared, and the image was somehow etched in the finest detail in my mind or something that served as my mind in a state beyond my experience and even my belief.” (page 4)

“What do we make of these strangers who appear in the midst of snowstorms and save stranded motorists, or who protect children from certain death, or who lay their hands on the sick in hospitals, or who lift the drowning from the water, or who guide the family from a burning house, or who perform all manner of miracles and then disappear?” (page 19)

“...an angel named Ariel had entered my life, had indeed saved my life, and now, so I believed, was guiding me both to her and to my very purpose in being alive.” (page 46)

“I wrote down what I believed to be true, what I *knew* to be true, and I repeated it to myself often as a kind of credo...

1. I am not insane.
2. Angels exist.
3. I have died and returned.
4. There are others like me.
5. I have a divine task to fulfill.” (page 56)

“‘You will learn two things from me,’ he said loudly. ‘The first is the nature of the angels. The second and far more important is that Christians, Jews, and Muslims all serve the same God, and that indeed all peoples everywhere who pray with love, mercy, and compassion in their hearts speak to the same God and receive His blessings.’” (page 83)

“‘Do not fear the swift rising of spirit,’ said Raphael ‘...Do not fear the attack of the demon, for I shall be by your side. You have been prepared to defeat pain. You will be prepared to defeat evil.’” (page 115)

“...those who follow their dualistic beliefs in God and Satan were wrong. There is only one God, only one I AM THAT I AM. In the original creation, there was never a Satan, an Ahriman, a Devil, or whatever name has been given to the essence of evil by men. It is men who have created such beings.” (page 122)

“Nothing is what it seems to be at this level of your existence. However, in His compassion for human souls, God has filled this level of reality with signs and wonders pointing to the higher worlds and how to return to them.” (page 145)

“Man is at war with himself and not understanding why, because of the accumulation of unloving thoughts and intentions. This pattern is rapidly congealing. Love, mercy, and understanding must become both the conscious and unconscious guideposts for human development, lest this magnificent and noble branch of creation find itself at a literal dead end.” (page 147)

“You cannot understand this in your current condition, but you can understand that love, mercy, and compassion are the cornerstones of God’s own intent and therefore pervade all of creation. Conscious focus upon these three elements of existence will lead back to the higher planes and help bring salvation to this universe.” (page 150)

“I was always so close to uniting my daily consciousness with the vastly greater knowledge that lay somewhere in subconscious or super conscious levels just beyond my grasp. It was intensely frustrating, yet exhilarating also, to know that answers would be forthcoming at some point, but...not yet...not yet.” (page 208)